

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

L'Évolution Sexuelle dans l'Espèce humaine. Par le Dr. HENRI SICARD, Doyen de la Faculté des Sciences de Lyon. Avec 94 figures intercalées dans le texte. Paris : Libraire F. B. Baillière et Fils, 1892.

THIS little volume contains much information relating to the development of animals and the peculiarities of their life-history in all its main outlines, beginning with the asexual forms—parthenogenesis establishing a “passage” to the sexual. Sexual evolution in the Darwinian sense—that is, from the variability where the cause is unknown, gradually developed by natural selection—finds little or no place in it, notwithstanding its title. But we have numerous facts respecting secondary characters, amounting in some species to dimorphism. Sexual selection, it is contended, tends to develop such characters, for, as the greatest dissimilarity favours progress, whatever has the effect of diminishing it “is in opposition to the teaching (*données*) of biology.” “Many points remain obscure,” our author admits: for instance, among insects the occurrence of apterous females in species closely allied to others where the sexes are scarcely distinguishable.

Perhaps the most valuable part of the work is the account of the development of the embryo, including a notice of the once hotly-contested gastræa-theory. “Differentiation of the sexes” and “of secondary sexual characters in general” follow. The seventh chapter applies to man only—his anatomy and “mental constitution.” The concluding chapter treats of the various races of mankind, illustrated by a number of characteristic portraits, and giving many curious details: the love of ornamentation seems predominant among the males of savages.

Briefly, the work is a useful summary, a few still-disputed points excepted, of the present condition of our knowledge.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the Genus Polychrysia of Hübner (a Group of Plusioid Moths).

By ARTHUR G. BUTLER, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

IN his ‘Verzeichniss bekannter Schmettlinge,’ at p. 251, Hübner founded a genus *Polychrysia* on the single European species *P. moneta*. The characters given for his genus were, as usual, valueless; but the genus itself is a good one and must be adopted. It is synonymous with the genus *Deva* of American authors and of Walker’s ‘Supplement,’ but has nothing to do with the typical species of that author’s genus.